NAQCC News

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1. CHALLENGE: Our July challenge is another one of Tom's ideas. It sounds intriguing and I don't know how hard it will be. I suspect not too hard. You must make at least 5 QSO's on each of 5 different bands (160-10M) during the month. That's a minimum of 25 QSO's. Check the rules for more details.

If you have an idea for a challenge, please let us know and we'll consider it.

Full Challenge info here.

2. JUNE SPRINT RESULTS: Our June sprint provided some real competition for the many awards available including the two key collecting books. Those were won by John KA8MPT and Gregg WB8LZG. Both John and Gregg received their books by June 25, just a few days after the sprint results were finalized. We know these two members are enjoying the books and finding them as fascinating as I did when I held them here for mailing. They thanked me for the books and in turn I pass those thanks along to Dave K4TWJ and to the other NAQCC members whose donations made the book prize possible.

Our winners were:

Key book # 1 - KA8MPT
Key book # 2 - WB8LZG
1st SWA - K3WWP
1st Gain - K5GQ
Special Award (Portable operation) - WB8LZG
Top Non-Winner - WB8LZG

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because the listing of your results on our web site shows the ham radio world that you are interested in preserving CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

We had 9 stations who didn't submit a log show up from 5 to 17 times in the 29 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 9 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. One other log was received after the log deadline and listed as a check log.

Full sprint info here.

3. LATEST BEAR HUNT NEWS: From our Bear Master Ron, K5DUZ:

Full bear hunt info here.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: Each month in our end-of-the-month newsletter we are going to talk a bit about one of our awards. This month it's the 1000 MPW Award. Even though this is an award that is also issued by other QRP organizations, it has proved to be the NAQCC's most popular award to date. We are not simply copying the other organization's award despite the similarity. We are not 'copy cats' at the NAQCC. Our award is different because it must be earned using simple wire antennas. Also a QSO must be started at QRP or QRPp power. In other words the power stated in the award application must be the power at which the QSO was initiated. No starting with higher power then reducing power to get a better mileage per watt figure. I think that concept might be unique to our award also. We hope you'll check out and work for this popular award. As always, read and be familiar with the complete rules before embarking on earning this or any award.

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

4a. LATEST AWARD WINNERS:
1000MPW - W2JEK - #0028
1000MPW - WD9HBC - #0029

Full List of all award winners here.

5. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: Thanks for the comments on the newsletter. I guess we're doing it right since we've not received any negative comments.

- From President Tom Mitchell KB3LFC #0001 - As John, K3WWP relates below, we were participants in an experiment by the University of Pittsburgh psychology department to test the memory functions of CW operators.

I joked with John, saying that if we wrote about this for the NAQCC Newsletter, I had the perfect headline in mind: **NAQCC Officers Have Their Heads Examined!** (Smile)!

Earlier this evening I was lookinng over the NAQCC membership list. We are close to hitting the 2,000 mark. Less than three years ago when John and I discussed forming the NAQCC we

both thought we'd be accomplishing something if we signed up 50 members. We agreed that we'd be elated to get 100 members. I guess to say the least we underestimated the popularity of CW and QRP operation.

This October, as most of you know, for the club's third anniversary we will (as we did last year) operate a special events station, N3A. As we did last year, we will issue a certificate and/or QSL card to all stations we work that request one or the other or both. As with our other awards the certificates/QSL cards are free, but we ask for a donation to cover handling and mailing.

I got to thinking about the club's successes over the past nearly three years, and it came to me that the club is successful because of you, the members. Personally, I have met many of you on the air and please forgive me if we work and I don't remember your name. The fact that so many are applying for NAQCC awards and participating in the monthly sprints is more than encouraging.

I do have one suggestion to help promote the NAQCC. If you have a label printing software program, print out a simple label. Something like:

North American QRP CW Club
Free membership
naqcc.info/

Stick the label on the back of the QSL cards you send out (and please do send out QSLs). If nothing else the labels may pique someone's curiosity.

Best 72 to all and have a great summer.

- Club President KB3LFC and Vice President K3WWP participated in a Morse Code study at the University of Pittsburgh on June 18. After an hour long delay in a traffic jam that made us 15 minutes late for our appointment, things went very smoothly.

Sara Guediche, the graduate student mentor for the test, who was running the test that day came down to the lobby looking for us shortly after I entered the building while Tom went off to park the van. She asked if I was there for the Morse study. I introduced myself and explained the situation to her.

Although Tom was scheduled to go first, I started off instead while we waited for Tom. The tests were done individually and we were the only two scheduled for that day so it didn't really matter.

I had to glance over a set of rules about the University of Pittsburgh studies in general and fill out a brief form. Then I had a brief oral interview with Sara about my Morse code history. How fast I could copy, when I first used it, how I used it, what Morse organizations I belonged to, and a few other such items.

Then we went on to the test itself. It consisted of several parts and took perhaps 30 minutes or so.

The first part was a Morse proficiency test in which I had to copy 9 short sentences in Morse as they were being sent at speeds from 16 to 25 WPM. I 'aced' that part of the test.

Next it was 9 more sentences at the same speeds, but I had to listen to the whole sentence before writing it down. The memory part of the testing was now starting to kick in. I also 'aced'

that.

Now came the real purpose of the test which was to evaluate how memory relates to remembering letters presented in three different ways - visually, aurally in English, and aurally in Morse code.

After a test run to explain how it worked, we got started. First I was presented with a sequence of 5 letters spoken in English, and after the 5 were spoken, I was handed a card to write down the sequence from memory. This was repeated 19 times for a total of 20 sequences.

Next the same procedure except the letters were flashed on a computer screen.

Finally the same thing with the letters presented in what I thought was agonizingly slow Morse code although thinking back now the Morse speed was probably the same speed as the other two groups. Perhaps something like a Farsnworth speed of 15 WPM for each letter, but an overall speed of 5 WPM or less.

That was the end of the test. I told Sara I thought I did the best with the letters flashed on the screen, then the spoken letters, finally the Morse letters. We chatted about the tests for a while longer. I told her that I found I was memorizing the 5 letters by breaking them down into two, then three letter groups. In other words I was remembering a two letter and a three letter group rather than a five letter group.

I thought the reason I didn't do as well with the Morse group was that it came at the end, and I was tiring a bit and losing a bit of concentration. I don't know the results of the test at this time, but I did ask Sara to let me know how I did. I am interested in seeing how my perception of my results matched what I actually did. However Sara did say that my memory was perhaps too good for their study. They learned more from folks who made more mistakes than I did.

When I finished, Tom came in for his session. We took a couple pictures for Tom's newspaper and for our NAQCC newsletter. We also met at that time Dr. Julie Fiez, the principal investigator for the project. Unfortunately we didn't get to meet the third member of the team, Maryam Khatami, the undergraduate researcher most involved with the study.

Here is a picture of Sara with Tom KB3LFC (top), and Dr. Faiz with John K3WWP:

Tom and I were only the 8th and 9th persons to take the tests so far. I thought the test was fascinating, and I hope they get many more participants to make their results more meaningful. If you have the time and are interested and a trip to Pittsburgh would not be too burdensome, I urge you to take the study.

You can contact them in two ways - phone 412-624-7083 - email morsestudy@hotmail.com. You can click here to read an interview with Dr. Julie Fiez.

It was a wonderful experience for me, and I think you'd find it the same.

- If you participated in Field Day, we urge you to submit your soapbox comments to the ARRL web site at http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/?con_id=133. Include a plug for the NAQCC in your comments. Remember there are many hams out there interested in QRP/CW who may not yet know about the NAQCC, and this may provide a way for them to find out about us and join up.

- We've decided to give away 3 of the code study CD's donated to the club by Frank, KB3AAG in the following manner. All you have to do is email us with your guess of the date when the NAQCC signs up its 2,000th member. The three people coming closest to the actual date will be mailed the CD's. If you're already a speed demon on CW, we request that you refrain from entering unless you have a buddy who could benefit from the CD's. They are intended to take someone who doesn't know the code at all up to a 20 WPM operator. If you are already at 20 WPM or greater they would be of little benefit to you.

All entries must be received by July 10th at 0000Z. In case of ties, the winner(s) will be drawn at random from those who tied.

- As Tom mentioned, we have received the special event call of N3A to be used the whole month of October for the NAQCC's third anniversary. We are in the process of deciding exactly what to do with it. We need your input. Would you be interested in operating with the call for one or two days during October? If so, email us before the end of July. When we see how many folks are interested, we'll make our plans and notify those who expressed an interest.

- The NAQCC has a true friend in Dave Mascaro, W3KM. As I hope you know, Dave is the creator of the GenLog program. At our request he has made another modification to GenLog to tailor it even more closely to our NAQCC sprints. If you use GenLog for our sprints, and we urge you to do so, it now produces an output log file that allows simple cut and paste into our log cross-checking system. Thanks Dave! You've saved our checker (K3WWP) a lot of work, especially if everyone uses GenLog.

So please update your current copy of GenLog to version 6.57 or higher from the GenLog website before our July sprint.

When you use GenLog, after the sprint is over, click the Log menu and select Write ASCII Log [YourCall.log], then send us the YourCall.log file that is produced.

If you use pencil and paper logging during the sprint, you can also enter the info into GenLog after the sprint and it will produce a nice log for you to send to us. That will probably take less time than retyping your paper log into a computer word processing program. Also it will allow you to check that you copied NAQCC numbers and SPC's correctly if you update the GenLog data file regularly from here on the web site.

- Starting with the July sprint we will be continuing our prize prize each month with the prize being a set of CD's to the MEMBER with the highest overall score. Each month after that it will be the MEMBER with the highest score who hasn't previously won the CD's. That way we can distribute them to as many different hams as possible. These CD's are Chuck K7QO's Books on CD along with his Morse code learning course. They are being generously donated to the club by Chuck. In the December and June sprint each year, the CD's will be won in a random drawing of all members who make at least 5 QSO's and submit a log.

- We have another generous donor. WB8LZG has donated a batch of his homemade bug/paddle handles for the club to give away. See http://www.egr.msu.edu/~mulderg/ for a look

at these beautiful creations. We are going to give a set of these away to one MEMBER each month. We will hold a random drawing from all members who complete the monthly challenge and submit their report. Only one set can be won by an individual after which he or she becomes ineligible for future drawings. This will begin with our August challenge.

- The spring rag chew award is now history. I love anything that encourages longer QSO's as I like to find out more about the ham I am working beyond the staid RST-QTH-Name-Rig-WX of most QSO's. The winner of the award for making the most QSO's is K3WWP who made 17 rag chews during spring. It was very disappointing to virtually win by default because only 2 stations reported their results. In our member survey many members said they enjoyed rag chewing above all other activities. I wonder why those folks didn't participate in this award.

- Don't forget to enter the FISTS Summer Sprint and report your results to them mentioning that you are an NAQCC member. It's coming up Friday evening, July 13th (Saturday, July 14th 0000-0400Z). Let's show FISTS how much we at the NAQCC appreciate what they have been doing to promote CW use since long before the NAQCC was founded. Our two organizations complement each other beautifully in helping to promote CW.

- We've posted a page on the web site dealing with the club activity days mentioned previously. Check out and comment on the following: Activity Days.

- I neglected to post a picture of KB3LFC, N3IJR, and K3WWP at the Butler hamfest in our last newsletter so...:

6. MEMBER NEWS: This section of the newsletter is really picking up steam now. Let's not get

derailed and keep the momentum going. Send us anything you think is noteworty concerning QRP and CW that you've done lately.

We've received the following news items for this issue. Is yours among them? Send your news to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**.

From Mike KD8CQP #1847 - I just got my tech license about one year ago. I am in the process of learning CW now through a program called NuMorse. It seems to be going very well for me. My true interest in radio is CW. There are so many forms of voice communication available that it seems like there is no challenge regardless of circumstances.
After receiving my Tech license I bought a high end HT. I was excited when I first got my license. I turned my radio on but I only heard silence. I thought my radio had arrived broken. I contacted our local radio club and they informed me that the local 2M radio meetings in my town were once a week and that other than that I might be able to catch somebody on there way to or from work. I was disappointed.
I started perusing CW because of the range in which you can make contacts and because it was a requirement for the General class license. I got busy with work and family and I never took the CW test. Now I have a little more time to devote to it and I think that I am close to being ready to go on the air with CW. I can probably pass the new General License test within a few months.
At this point I need someone who can give me advise on the equipment I need and what bands I should work as a beginner in CW. Would you or someone in your club be able to help? Thanks

From Karl N3IJR #1770 - I can still remember my first Field Day. It was in 1988 with the South Hills Brass Pounders Club. I can still smell the Old Surplus Army tent from WW2. I can still see the guys with some old boat anchors and straight keys and just dreaming about the day I would set up my own station and know CW. Well here it is 19 years later, I know CW and I set up my own station. In fact it was a QRP/CW station. In addition to NAQCC, I belong to the Tri-County CW Amateur Radio Club. For a number of years they have pretty much used the same station set up. This year I asked if I could set up a QRP/CW station and they agreed. To many of the guys and gals in the club this was something totally new, they heard about QRP, but never saw it in action. So 2007 was my year to show them QRP in action. I used my Argonaut 2 and powered it with a Deep Cell Battery. I made my version of a G5RV, 4 wires instead of 2 and faced them North to South and 2 East to West as an inverted V. I really didn't want to spend the money but I did end up buying a MFJ collapsible mast that ended up working great. I attached it to the hitch of my truck. I started out on 20 meters as 40 was taken by one of the other stations. It was a rough start on 20 as the band keep dropping out. I did get 12 contacts on 20, but it was a tuff battle. I moved to 80 about 4:30 pm and started to do very well, got 30 on 80. Then about 5:00 am the guy on 40 left so I had my chance on 40, I got another 20 there. I just wish CW on Field Day was all QRP, hi hi. I learned a lot as well as having a great time. I learned about how to jump in, in a pile up, and boy was there a pile up. It was great to show other how you really can work the big guns with 4 watts, I can still see one of the fellows sitting right next to me saying, "I can't believe he is only using 4 watts." I can still see him going to all the other stations saying, "You ought to see what Karl is doing with 4 watts". Well you get the idea by now, and all I can say is I had a blast! 73 es 72

From Mike KC2EGL #1236 - I spent this year's FD with my club, The Fort Armstrong Wireless Association. I was the sole CW operator. In past years the club ran as a 2A with no CW. This year we ran as a 3A with 1 transciever being CW only. I had a wonderful time operating CW. I logged only 75 QSO's because I had plenty of visitors to my tent asking lots of questions. One of the visitors was one of the county commisioners for Armstrong County Pa. She was very surprised to see (and hear) that morse code is very popular among the many radio junkies we call friends. The general atmosphere of the contatcts I made was very friendly. Only a handful

refused to QRS for me. I was even asked to QRS once (N1IH, he sent slowly and very accurately). I would sit and copy the calls of those who would not QRS for me bit by bit until I had all the info I needed then I would jump in and make the contact. I find that the more I operate CW the less I am drawn to use my MIC. I wonder if this is a common side effect of operating CW. If anyone worked K3TTK on FD, I would like to say thank you very much for your patience of a slower operator. Next year I will be operating CW during FD for my club. Being the sole CW operator means I do not have to fight for air time. Hi-Hi!!!

From Bob VA3RKM #0982 - Three of us NAQCC members (Mike VE3WMB, Martin VA3SIE and Bob VA3RKM) and several others had a great time with Field Day 2007 as VA3OVQ (Ottawa Valley QRP) on tiny Bate Island under a bridge that links Ottawa, Ontario with Gatineau, Quebec. We set up 3 QRP stations (3A battery) in screened tents and park gazebos, as well as a VHF station that got little use, operating for the afternoon and early evening. Solar cells charged our batteries. Propagation was not the best, but more than adequate for our QRP signals from temporary antennas. Almost all the QSOs were CW, except for a few on SSB to see how that would work from our site. Some newer hams sat in to learn how to do CW contesting. We were pleased to see that they thought that CW contesting exchanges were as much fun to do as we know they are. As for the higher speeds in contesting, we just told them that usually we only have to copy about 10 Morse characters correctly to get the points and so we did not have to be code experts. A little practice with Morse Runner helps a lot. And our monthly NAQCC sprints are designed to accommodate beginners as well as seasoned ops.

From Scott AE5BH #1876 - Stumbling into a QRPp experience: When I decided to return to Ham radio at the ripe old age of 28, I decided that this time, I was going to make a plan and set some goals. The goal was to have fun, work only CW, at QRP power, and with simple wire antennas. Sounds like a familiar concept? Well, discovering NAQCC was a part of the influence to my plan.
After some research and thought, I decided to purchase an Yaesu FT817ND as my rig. Since I would be using various types of antennas, I chose the LDG-Z100 as my tuner. I already had a J-38 key from my first foray into Ham radio, so I was good to go. The thing I liked about the FT817 was that it had alot of bands and all the modes. This was important to me for emergency preparedness reasons. It also didn't limit me in case I ever wanted to try something else. Plus, it was a true QRP rig at 5 watts max.
Now anybody who has used one of these tiny rigs knows that it has a menu driven system for all the bells and whistles. Setting power levels, activating filters, setting the key bk, etc all require that you scroll through menus and press a few buttons. This complex setup, set me up for an interesting adventure one Monday night this June.
Admittedly, I always try and make contact using 5 watts. I guess I am a QRO-QRPer! However, whenever I tune up, I always drop to the 1/2 watt setting of the rig to avoid hurting the finals. Since I run a 66ft inverted Vee fed with twinlead, I can tune just about any band with the autotuner from 40-10. I often switch bands and use the autotuner in 1/2 watt mode to tune up. The process can be kind of tedious however. If I am tuned up on one frequency and I jump over to another, I have to go into the menu system, set the power to 1/2 watt, then scroll to turn off the filter so I can hear more and listen, tune, then go back and turn the power back on, and then turn the filter back on when I zero beat a station. If somebody is calling CQ that I want to respond to, I go through this sequence, but of course, I switch to nearby empty frequency to tune up.
Sometimes I forget to turn the power back up after tuning. I notice this when my call isn't answered and I look at the power icon on the display. Most of the time, after putting it back to 5 watts, my call is heard, since I'm not pushing 1000 watts, I emphasize "most of the time."
Well on this night, I was checking the 30m band when I heard a caller that I thought I'd like to answer since they were sending at a comfortable copying speed for me. I went through the normal process tuning process and called him back. W0SJS in St Louis, MO which is about

650 miles from here in Houston, TX . We had a pleasant QSO. The exchange seemed normal and not unusual. No doubt I was being copied. We talked about our ages, occupations, etc. The QSO lasted for about 1/2 hour before we signed off.
The excitement came 1 minute later when I went to check conditions on 40m. I went to tune up again when I noticed I had not set my power back to 5 watts! The first thing I do before I hit the tune button is to turn the power down. Could this be right, I thought? It took a moment to set in, but then it hit me. I just communicated across 650 miles on 500mW. That's more miles than milliwatts! I was simply amazed and thrilled. What a wonderful accident!
Next time, I might just forget to set the power back up on purpose. After all, isnt' the spirit of QRP to make contact with the least amount of power? 73

From John K3WWP #0002 - I am amazed and a little embarrassed at having a three month winning streak in the SWA category in our NAQCC sprints. I'm also pleased because it shows the ham radio world that QRP and very simple indoor wire antennas do work and work very well. However, I want to be able to send out our beautiful First Place certificates to other members instead of hoarding them here myself. So come on and beat me in July. I've won enough of these things already.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.